

STAFF & STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Monash University staff, and students undertaking University-related travel.

For the purpose of this policy:

- 'traveller' refers to both staff and students;
- where a graduate research student is travelling for the purpose of their studies, they are deemed to be a student; and
- references to 'the University' includes Monash University Australia, Monash University Malaysia, Monash University Indonesia, Monash Suzhou, Monash Suzhou Research Institute, the Monash University Prato Centre, and World Mosquito Program (WMP) Ltd (and its subsidiaries) unless indicated otherwise.

This policy does not apply to travel between the University's Victorian campuses and locations where such travel is part of a staff member's agreed duties.

POLICY STATEMENT

The University is committed to supporting staff and student travel that is purposeful and can be undertaken safely, confidently and economically. This policy outlines the requirements and responsibilities for travel approval, booking and management.

1. General Principles

- 1.1. The University is committed to ensuring that travel affords valuable educational, research and engagement opportunities.
- 1.2. The University places paramount value on the safety, health and wellbeing of its travellers and it is essential the University is aware of the location of travellers whenever they are undertaking University-related travel.
- 1.3. The University supports travel to be undertaken where:
 - any risks are identified and appropriately managed, with priority given to the safety, health and wellbeing of the traveller, and to the University's ability to fulfil its duty of care obligations;
 - the travel represents value for money, and aligns with the advancement of the University's strategic and operational goals, and sustainable expenditure principles;
 - the University's operations are not unreasonably disrupted; and
 - the travel aligns with the University's values, and is socially and ethically appropriate, with due consideration given to [environmental sustainability](#).
- 1.4. All travellers are expected to:
 - consider the need for the travel;
 - take responsibility for their personal health, safety and wellbeing, and not engage in non-essential high-risk activities;
 - conduct travel with consideration to environmental sustainability and impact to the local culture;
 - behave in accordance with local customs and laws, and consistent with the principles of University policies;
 - comply with any conditions imposed by external funding bodies or sponsors; and
 - bear the cost of private travel.

2. Traveller safety

- 2.1. All domestic intra- and interstate travel will be approved as per section 4, and an activity risk assessment must be undertaken as per clause 2.2, where required.

- 2.2. Travellers undertaking fieldwork, research activities or leading student group travel, must conduct a risk assessment, as set out in the [OHS Risk Management Procedure](#).
- 2.3. In certain circumstances, the University may suspend or cancel approved travel, for example in response to security, a natural disaster event, or where a traveller is involved in or impacted by a critical incident.

International travel

- 2.4. Travellers must be aware of the following when considering travel to international destinations:
 - health and safety risks;
 - civil unrest and national public security threats; and
 - climate and natural disaster warnings.
- 2.5. The University assesses travel to international locations based on advice issued by the Australian Government [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (DFAT) including advice on [sanctions regimes](#). Travellers based outside Australia should also consult the in-country government travel advice.
- 2.6. The Associate Director, Travel Risk and Safety will undertake a global risk assessment for travel to DFAT 3 or 4 destinations (or otherwise flagged as high risk by Monash), and provide a recommendation and advice to mitigate any travel risks to the traveller and the Travel Approver on whether the travel should proceed, as outlined in section 4 below and in the [Staff Travel Procedure](#), [Student Travel Procedure](#) and [Leading Student Group Travel Procedure](#). This should be requested a minimum of two weeks (for staff) or four weeks (for students) prior to departure.
- 2.7. Travellers are responsible for ensuring they have obtained all required and recommended vaccinations at least four weeks prior to travel. Travellers should refer to the [Immunisation Procedure](#) for further information.

3. Incident and emergency management

- 3.1. For domestic travel incidents or emergencies, travellers should report the incident as outlined in the [Safety and Security Incident Reporting Procedure](#).
- 3.2. For international travel impacted by a critical incident or emergency, travellers must engage the University's Emergency Traveller Assist Service, as follows:

Table 1: International Travel Emergency Management Contacts

Nature of Critical Incident	Action to be undertaken by the traveller
Major Incident: e.g. immediate threat to safety or welfare of staff, local emergency services may be engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact local authorities; Contact the University's Emergency Travel Assist Service; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform supervisor, Activity Leader or Activity Approver of their welfare
Moderate Incident: e.g. staff may be admitted to hospital, victim of robbery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If required, contact local authorities; ● Contact the University's Emergency Travel Assist Service; and ● Inform supervisor, Activity Leader or Activity Approver of their welfare
Minor Incident: e.g. illness (not requiring hospitalisation), local altercation, lost property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If required, should contact the University's Emergency Travel Assist Service; and/or ● If required, inform supervisor, Activity Leader or Activity Approver of their welfare.

- 3.3. Any OHS incidents that may have occurred throughout the travel must be recorded, as set out in the [OHS Hazard and Incident Procedure](#), within the Safety And Risk Analysis Hub (SARAH).

4. Approval for travel

- 4.1. Approval for all University travel, including travel funded by an external body, must be obtained from:
 - 4.1.1. for academic staff - the staff member's head of unit;
 - 4.1.2. for professional staff - the staff member's supervisor;

- 4.1.3. for students - the appropriate approval body as outlined in the [Student Travel Procedure](#) and the approval pathway as outlined in [Leading Student Group Travel Procedure](#); and
- 4.1.4. for staff of World Mosquito Program Ltd (and its subsidiaries) - the approval pathway as outlined in the [Staff Travel Schedule - World Mosquito Program Ltd](#).
- 4.2. Prior to approving a travel request, Travel Approvers must consider the risks, benefits, environmental impact and overall cost of the proposed travel, including any DFAT travel advice.
- 4.3. University-related travel may be approved for individuals external to the University, such as visiting speakers. In this instance, the approval pathway is outlined at clause 4.1 and travel must be arranged as per section 5, including that the travel must be registered in the relevant travel approval system.

Private travel

- 4.4. Staff intending to undertake private travel that is combined with University-related travel must apply for annual leave as per the [Annual Leave Procedure](#) and complete any requirements as set out in the [Staff Travel Procedure](#).
- 4.5. Students intending to undertake private travel before or after their approved travel program should ensure appropriate travel insurance arrangements are in place.

5. Travel bookings and arrangements

- 5.1. Travel bookings and other arrangements should meet the requirements of the travel as outlined in clause 1.3, and show due consideration to the purpose and circumstances to justify the financial and environmental cost of the travel.
 - 5.1.1. There may be circumstances where it is reasonable for staff to use discretion when incurring travel expenses whilst travelling, such as bookings required in emergency circumstances. These must be appropriate and will be subject to reporting and reconciliation requirements.
- 5.2. Appropriate business-related expenditure can be made with a University corporate credit card, or sought via reimbursement in accordance with the [Corporate Credit Card and Reimbursements Policy](#) and [Procedure](#).
- 5.3. All personal travel costs must be paid for using personal funds, including any costs associated with accompanying non-Monash travellers (such as family members). Staff should refer to the [Staff Travel Procedure](#) for requirements associated with accompanying family members.

Class of air travel

- 5.4. All staff must book economy class airfares, unless one or more of the following conditions allow for a premium economy or business class fare:
 - the duration of the flight is more than seven continuous hours; or
 - is an approved reasonable adjustment in accordance with the [Reasonable Workplace Adjustments Procedure](#).
- 5.5. Approval for a premium economy or business class fare:
 - must be received from an authorising officer and obtained through the University's travel approval system; and
 - the authorising officer must give due consideration to the purpose and circumstances to justify the cost of the travel.
- 5.6. Staff of World Mosquito Program Ltd (and its subsidiaries) must refer to the [Staff Travel Schedule - World Mosquito Program Ltd](#) for information on arrangements for class of air travel.

Bookings and visas

- 5.7. Travellers, or an approved nominee, are responsible for organising all University-related travel and for ensuring they have the necessary travel documentation, including the relevant documents set out in clause 5.8 and in the [Staff Travel Procedure](#), [Student Travel Procedure](#) and [Leading Student Group Travel Procedure](#).
- 5.8. For international travel, travellers are responsible for arranging and ensuring they have obtained the correct visas, have a passport that is valid for at least six months after the conclusion of the travel, and meet any immigration requirements of their destination and any transit locations.

Accommodation

- 5.9. The choice of accommodation while travelling should:

- provide a safe and secure environment;
- be convenient to the place of the travel activity; and,
- provide value for money appropriate to the location.

5.10. Travellers may book accommodation in online accommodation marketplaces (for example, Airbnb) in cities where they operate legally, provided all reasonable measures have been taken to ensure the traveller's safety.

5.11. Students are required to comply with any accommodation conditions of their travel program.

Insurance

5.12. For domestic travel, staff and Higher Degree by Research students should refer to [University Insurance Services](#) to ensure appropriate coverage is provided. Coursework Students should consider their personal insurance needs when undertaking domestic travel.

5.13. For international travel, the University provides travel insurance for all travellers undertaking approved travel, which includes emergency assistance. Prior to travel, staff and students must refer to the [Staff Travel Insurance](#) and [Student Travel Insurance](#) websites to check they are appropriately covered for the intended travel.

5.13.1. For travel to a country included on the United Nations Security Council or Australian [sanctions regimes](#), travellers must also ensure prior approval from the University Insurance Services by email to insuranceservices@monash.edu at least two weeks prior to departure.

5.14. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition that may impact on their ability to travel must obtain a 'fit to travel' letter from their medical practitioner, and may be asked to provide this if the traveller is involved in an incident due to the pre-existing condition.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

6.1. Strategic Procurement is responsible for reporting on staff travel activity to assess value for money and compliance with this policy and associated procedures and schedules.

7. Breach of policy

7.1. The University treats any breach of its policies, procedures and schedules seriously; it encourages reporting of concerns about noncompliance, and manages compliance in accordance with the applicable Enterprise Agreement, relevant instrument of appointment and/or applicable contract terms. A failure to comply with this policy may result in action by the University. Such action may include disciplinary and other action up to and including potential termination of employment for employees, or the cessation of engagements with the University for other persons.

7.2. Students who fail to comply with this policy may face disciplinary action in accordance with the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

DEFINITIONS

Activity Approver	The activity approver is the head of unit (e.g. Dean or delegate) who has approved the activity offering by weighing strategic aims with risk appetite. They are the owner of activity risk, budget and resources and ensuring compliance, and have authority to approve program finances.
Activity leader	The activity leader is the staff member who has committed to undertake the necessary training and requirements to be competent to lead student group travel.
Authorising officer	An authorising officer is a Portfolio Head (e.g. COO, CFO, DVC), or Dean, this authority cannot be delegated.
Best fare of the day	The best fare of the day is the most direct and cost-effective airfare available at the time of booking that also meets the business requirements of the traveller, and as agreed with the traveller's supervisor.
Curricular or co-curricular group travel	Activities which are recognised on a student's academic record. e.g as a unit enrolment or on Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS).
Domestic travel	Any travel undertaken in the country where the traveller is located, but excluding travel between campuses in the same region e.g. between Melbourne-based campuses.
Financial delegation	Financial authority delegated to a staff member in accordance with the delegations matrix or the financial delegation limits.

Private travel	Days throughout travel that are not related to the primary business purpose of the travel. For staff this may include annual leave, long service leave, time in lieu, leave without pay, non-work days for part-time and casual staff, the University shut down period, public holidays and weekends either before or after private travel. Also includes a change in location during business related travel for a private purpose. For students this may include discretionary free time and travel undertaken for personal reasons outside the approved dates. Travel costs relating to staff working remotely in a location for convenience, rather than relating to a business need, are private costs.
Staff	A person that is paid in an academic or professional capacity by the University: (a) under a relevant Enterprise Agreement; or (b) contract of engagement.
Student group travel	Student group travel encompasses two or more students undertaking an off-campus domestic or international travel experience.
Supervisor	The person who is responsible for the supervision of the staff member or graduate research student. In most cases this will be the immediate line manager or in the case of graduate research students their main supervisor.
Sustainable expenditure principles	The sustainable expenditure principles ensure there is adequate consideration when spending University funds, regardless of source. For the purpose of this policy, travel approvers should consider travel requests against these principles: necessary, reasonable, appropriate, allowable.
Travel Approver	Travel approvers have delegated authority to approve activities that meet compliance requirements. Where groups do not meet compliance requirements, they must be escalated to the appropriate committee or senior manager and activity approver (e.g. Monash Abroad, Deans/FGMs etc).

GOVERNANCE

Supporting procedures	Leading Student Group Travel Procedure Staff Travel Procedure Student Travel Procedure
Supporting schedules	Staff Travel Schedule - World Mosquito Program Ltd
Associated policies	Corporate Credit Card and Reimbursements Policy Employment Conditions Policy Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Policy Staff Code of Conduct Student Code of Conduct
Related Legislation	Fringe Benefits Tax Act 1986 (Cth) Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986 (Cth)
Category	Operational
Approval	Vice-Chancellor's Executive Committee 11 November 2022
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Policy owner	Chief Operating Officer & Senior Vice-President
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Content enquiries	traveloffice@monash.edu